



Speech By  
**Hon. Meaghan Scanlon**


**MEMBER FOR GAVEN**

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Record of Proceedings, 1 September 2021

## **MINISTERIAL STATEMENT**

### **Single-Use Plastics**

 **Hon. MAJ SCANLON** (Gaven—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef and Minister for Science and Youth Affairs) (10.02 am): The Sunshine State is giving a swathe of single-use plastics the flick with our latest ban taking effect today. As the Premier said, half of all plastics are designed to be used only once. Less than one-fifth of all plastic is recycled globally, which has contributed to more than 75 per cent of the waste collected from our beaches being made of plastic.

Today's ban is part of our war on waste to stop rubbish from ending up in local waterways, beaches and landfill. It adds to our record \$1.4 billion investment to protect the environment, support business and create jobs as part of our COVID-19 economic recovery plan. Preventing that rubbish from ending up on our beaches and in our waterways will protect animals such as turtles, which alone have a 20 per cent chance of dying if they ingest just one piece of plastic. It will help protect our beautiful reef and the \$6 billion economy and 60,000 jobs it supports. We know that eight million tonnes of plastic leaks into the ocean around the world each year, which is 170 wheelie bins of plastics every minute.

Today, Queensland is stepping up to show the world that we are doing our bit. Today we are banning products such as single-use plastic straws and expanded polystyrene takeaway containers and cups. We are also banning cutlery, bowls, plates and a range of other products.

**Mr SPEAKER:** I will allow it. They will not be around for much longer.

**Ms SCANLON:** The ban will stop those items being supplied in Queensland and it includes items provided free with purchased meals or sold in packets such as party supplies. It will help reduce plastic pollution by 20 per cent over the next two years. We have already seen the benefits of the lightweight single-use plastic shopping bag ban, as the Premier said, with a 70 per cent reduction in all plastic bag litter since the bag ban began in 2018.

Queensland businesses and community groups are on board with the ban too. In partnership with the National Retail Association we have already engaged with more than 5,000 businesses just over the past three months, helping small to large retailers to prepare for the ban. They have gone to over 310 centres and shopping strips throughout the state, providing resources and advice to cafes, restaurants, food outlets, discount stores, supermarkets, party suppliers, markets and many more. Even though many retailers have been doing it tough during the pandemic, the response has been overwhelmingly positive with retailers keen to do their bit for the environment.

Through the Boomerang Alliance we have also helped community groups and communities prepare for the upcoming ban. We have been very impressed with the take-up of these forums, with more than 400 attendees so far. Of course, there will be exemptions to ensure that Queenslanders with a disability or healthcare needs can continue to access and use items necessary for them.

Queenslanders have been leading the force in the war on waste. We have seen more than four billion containers exchanged through our Containers for Change program and we are leading the charge in creating a circular economy as part of our record \$1.4 billion investment in the environment

through initiatives such as our Recycling Modernisation Fund. With the economy and jobs now growing and recovering from the impacts of COVID-19 thanks to our recovery plan, so too is our environment with the ban on even more single-use plastics.